

THE CHURCHES OF FLORENCE.*

We have already referred to the churches of Florence, as edifices especially interesting in the student of architectural history. In one, we discern the decline of the Romanesque, and the approach of the Gothic style; in another, the dissolution of Gothic architecture, under the influence of Brunelleschi. We are able to study the rise of that important feature of architecture, the cupola, in the dome of Sta. Maria del Fiore: In the gates of the baptistry we find the finest specimens of metal work that were ever fabricated, and which

Michael Angelo said were "worthy to be the gates of Paradise." Indeed, the churches of Florence present so many objects of interest, that it is difficult to find room for the most important particulars within present limits. Including those which are attached to monasteries, they are also numerous. Richa, who wrote upon them in 1754, has devoted no less than ten quarto volumes to their history and description. We subjoin a list of the most interesting, with the names of the architects, and the dates of the principal parts, arranged in regular order:—

Gothic, is still designed in some accordance with the spirit of that style, and it is supposed, without reason, that the Dominicans required that the mediæval style should be observed, though Alberti himself was one of the revivers of the Italian. This façade is composed of different coloured marbles, a mode used also in the cathedral. The architects of the original church and conventual buildings were monks, educated in their profession by the Dominicans. It is worthy of note, that so little did Michael Angelo condemn the forms of Gothic architecture, that he called this church his *inamorate*.

The church of Sta. Maria del Fiore may be described as a cross church, the head and arms being formed by semi-octagonal projections. The space at the intersection is an octagon. The nave is four arches in length. The building was commenced by Arnolfo, who designed the cupola, but did not live to execute it. He left a complete model of the building, which unfortunately has been destroyed. After Arnolfo's death, in 1300, the works were carried on at various periods by Giotto, Orsagius, Taddeo Gaddi, and Lorenzo Filippi. Giotto erected the campanile, which stands beside the front of the building, and which it was his intention to surmount with a spire. In 1420 Brunelleschi was chosen from a number of architects to carry out his celebrated plan for constructing the dome, which he accomplished by an arrangement of centering, now well understood, but which in the first instance subjected him to ridicule.—The baptistry, which adjoins the cathedral, is most elaborated for the gates already mentioned. One of them was by Andrea Pisano, and the two others by Lorenzo Ghiberti. Casts of these are in the School of Design in this metropolis, but they are by no means equal to the originals. 30,798 florins was the price paid to the artist for these works. The building itself, as shewn by a section in the work of Richa, much resembles the Pantheon. Indeed, by many it is supposed to have had a Roman origin, whilst others assert that, though Roman in style, it was built by Theodolina, the Lombard Queen. The interior of the cupola is covered with mosaics. The pavement is curious, and represents the signs of the Zodiac, with the sun in the centre, surrounded by the following strange line, which can be read either way:—

"En giro torte sol ciclos et rotoe igne."

The church of Santa Croce, the Westminster Abbey of Florence, is rich in works of art of all kinds, and monuments to illustrious men, amongst whom is Michael Angelo. The style of architecture is gothic, and, as in many of the Florentine churches, the windows are rich in stained glass. The inner cloister was built by Brunelleschi, and contains the chapel of the Passi. Amongst the monuments, that to Marzupini is an interesting example of the early style of the revival. It has the frequent form of the sarcophagus, with a figure on the lid, a type, perhaps derived from those of ancient Etruria, copies of which are in the British Museum.

The church called Or' San' Michele was originally built as a granary, by Arnolfo, but miraculous powers having been ascribed to an image of the Virgin, the building was converted into a church. The windows are said to be extremely beautiful; they are circular headed, with intersecting tracery. The style is in the main gothic, but the building has not often been delineated. It is much enriched with painting and sculpture. The shrine, or tabernacle is an elaborate piece of work. It is said, that Orsagius would not allow of any mortar or cement, but had the pieces clamped with metal, and the workmanship is excellent.—The Carthusian monastery, on the road to Sienna, is an extensive building, remarkable for the perfection of its arrangements for the accommodation of strangers. It is given in the "Architettura Toscana," by M.M. Grandjean de Montigny and A. Famin, which work may also be referred to for the plans of most of the Florentine churches.—The church of Santa Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, which, like most of those described, is attached to a convent, is curious as preserving the type of the basilica, in the atrium or cloister in front. This cloister has Ionic columns.—The piazza

Date.	Buildings, &c.	Architect.
1013 Of early date. Vestiges of Romanesque	San. Miniato; without the walls of the city Santi Apostoli. Santa Felice.	Niccolò Pisano.
1180 1186, original church.	Santa Trinità Church of the Annunziata. — Little cloister, or atrium. Sta. Maria Novella.	Fra Niccolò, and Fra Ristoro; Fra Giovanni de' Campi. Fra Giovanni da Nervesa. Arnolfo di Lapo.
1199—1250	— Campanile, chapter-house, and sacristy Or' San. Michele (the original granary)	Arnolfo. Arnolfo; Giotto; Taddeo Gaddi; Orsagius; Lorenzo Filippi; Brunelleschi.
1204 1205—1260, the original building faced with marble; dome closed in 1150	Battisterio di San Giovanni	Arnolfo.
1204 1208—1472	Santa Croce Santa Maria del Fiore	Arnolfo; Giotto; Taddeo Gaddi; Orsagius; Lorenzo Filippi; Brunelleschi.
— 1230	Bronze gates, at the south; Battisterio di San Giovanni	Andrea Pisano. Taddeo Gaddi; Orsagius.
1237—1250 1241	Or' San. Michele, the church The Carthusian Monastery near Florence, on the road to Sienna	Orsagius. Orsagius.
1248—1267 1268—1274	Tabernacle in the church Or' San. Michele. Two bronze gates, at the north and east; San- tisterio di San. Giovanni	Ghiberti. Brunelleschi.
Probably about 1267 1219 — 1230—1244 1230 1231—1244	Oratorio degli Angeli Sta. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi. Cupola of Sta. Maria del Fiore Chapel of the Pazzi; church of Sta. Croce. Parson and hospital of the Innocenti (Spedale degli Innocenti)—Piazza della Annunziata	Brunelleschi; designed by Arnolfo Brunelleschi. Brunelleschi. Brunelleschi. Brunelleschi.
1235 — A noble edifice 1240	San. Lorenzo — Sagrestia Vecchia Chapel of the Annunziata; church of the An- nunziata	Michelozzi. Giovanni di Bologna.
About 1240—(front completed, 1277) — 1267	San. Marco — Interior. Chapel of the Rucellai family, in atrium of San. Pancrasio.	Leon Baptista Alberti.
1273 — 1275 1276 — 1278 — 1280—1277 1278 — Probably about 1290 Probably about 1290 About 1290	San. Pancrasio. Santo Spirito, and general plan of the Augus- tine Convent. Choir of the church of the Annunziata The façade, Sta. Maria Novella Cloister in front of Sta. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi Great cloister of the church of the Annunziata Vault of the vestibule of the sacristy, in church of Santo Spirito Sacristy of Santo Spirito	Brunelleschi; finished 26 years after his death. Alberti designed; Luca Fancelli executed. Alberti. Brunelleschi; Giuliano da San Gallo. Simone Pollajuolo, called "Cro- naca." Andrea Contucci di Monte Ro- solino. Simone Pollajuolo, called "Cro- naca." Desiderio da Settignano, sculp- tor.
End of 13th century, subse- quent to Vasari Probably about 1300	Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, in the church of Sta. Croce. Portico, opposite to the portico of the hospi- tal; Piazza della Annunziata Sagrestia Nuova; church of San Lorenzo. Medicene Chapel: ditto.	Antonio da San Gallo. Michael Angelo.
About 1334 About 1334 Probably about 1350 1364 — Probably about 1368 1364—1364 1364 — 1364 16th century Probably about 1648	The Laurentian Library; ditto The altar; Sta. Maria Novella Second Cloister: Santo Spirito Chapel of the Gaddi; Sta. Maria Novella Portico of the church of the Annunziata San. Michele Church of the Franciscan Convent, near San. Miniato. First Cloister: Santo Spirito	Michael Angelo. Giorgio Vasari. Ammanati. Donato; parts by Michael Angelo. Giov. Caracci. Matteo Nigetti; Bernardo Silvani Alfonso Parigi.
	Church of the Carmine. La Badia.	

It is in their interiors that the churches of Florence are most interesting. Their façades, in many instances, are in a most unfinished state; even that of the cathedral has not been completed. Gothic architecture is found in many examples, but differs greatly from that of other parts of Europe. Churches of this style are massive, like the palaces which surround them, and they are wanting in the pinnacles, and flying buttresses, which lend so great a charm to all on this side the Alps. Those features of the style, which are found in Tuscany, seem to have been introduced from Germany; an opinion which is supported by the statements of Casarionio. It was practised in Florence, chiefly by Arnolfo; but it is known, that that architect did not neglect the national style, never extinct in Italy. It is supposed, that the foreign manner was introduced by the Franciscans and Dominicans, who practised it, after it had been abandoned in other instances, and who appear to have understood its value, as expressive of feelings of devotion. The style was called *Tedesco*.

* *Monumenti istorici delle Chiese Fiorentine, divise in molti Quartieri. Opera di Ottaviano Riccio, della Compagnia di Gesù. Accademia Fiorentina, e Sede Colombaria. 1754-62. 10 vols. etc. Firenze.*

Stained glass exists in most of the churches, both in those of Gothic, and of later date.

Of the churches of Florence, few have of late received so much attention as that of San Miniato. It is divided into three aisles by two rows of columns, and consists of nave and choir, the latter being raised to a considerable height above the level of the former, and reached by staircases. Beneath the choir is a crypt. The style is Romanesque. The church is in all respects a most interesting example, and has several early mosaics and frescoes. Each window of the apse is lighted by a single slab of alabaster, similar to the ancient *Lapis specularis*, and the light, shining through, is described as having a very pleasing effect.—The church of *Santi Apostoli* is also a Romanesque building. It is said, that it was the study of this edifice which first led Brunelleschi to adopt his characteristic style.—Santa Trinità was originally a Gothic church, but has received later additions.—Sta. Maria Novella is one of the few churches of which the front is complete. The campanile is in the Romanesque style, but the church is Gothic. The façade, however, being completed by Alberti, though not strictly